

## Section II: Functional Annexes

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### Purpose

This annex provides the concepts, systems and organizations used to alert and warn the public of any highly probable and immediate danger or disaster. Hazard-specific annexes to this plan contain additional information for such specific emergencies.

### Situations and Assumptions

#### 1. Situation

- A. When the public is threatened by an immediate or potential emergency situation, it is essential that timely alerting and warning be accomplished to protect the public. The alerting process draws the public's attention to a threat or danger. The warning process provides accurate information and instructions to guide public response in taking appropriate protective actions. Pre-scripted Emergency Alert System (EAS) may be utilized to pass initial information and instructions to the media and the general public.
- B. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is the primary digitized warning system for South Central Montana including Stillwater County. The system is designed to provide a 24-hours warning point to the public for emergencies and disasters.
- C. Hazards vary in both predictability and speed of onset. The time available for warning varies from ample to none.
- D. Effective public response relies on public education measures taken prior to an emergency.

#### 2. Assumptions

- A. A warning period will be available for most emergency situations although the amount of lead-time will vary from hazard to hazard. Proper use of adequate warning will save lives, reduce injuries, and protect property.
- B. A higher authority (State and /or Federal Government) may initiate warning whenever large-scale threat or emergency exists. Incident falling into this category include earthquake, terrorist attacks, and biohazards or severe weather conditions.
- C. Certain hazard-specific emergencies may require automatic emergency alerting, warning and notification of the general public and emergency response organizations. (See Section III: Hazard Annexes for further information.)
- D. Telephone communications may be disrupted or overloaded. Regional radio/television stations without emergency power may be off the air for lengthy periods of time.
- E. The broadcast media will be considered the primary system for providing warning and emergency information to the public, through news broadcasts and the EAS.

### Concept of Operations

#### 1. General

The concept of warning typically includes the activation of all or part of the emergency management organization and communicating with the general public and organizations such as schools, industry, employers, etc. to ensure that they are aware of a dangerous situation.

When designated authorities determine that it is necessary to warn the citizens of Stillwater County of a potential or imminent threat to public safety, a strategy appropriate to the situation will be implemented. This strategy will involve the coordinated use of many of the facilities, organizations, and techniques described in the following paragraphs, to ensure complete coverage of the affected area.

#### Sources of Emergency Information

Reports of situations that may endanger the public may come from a variety of sources, including private citizens, responding emergency services personnel, the National Warning System, the National Weather Service, major news wires services, government agencies, industries, and utilities.

#### Dissemination of Alert and Warning

- A. Public alerting and warning can be accomplished through one or a combination of means. These include:
- B. Selected indoor alerting/warning systems.
- C. Door-to-door alerting and warning, and route alerting and warning performed by law enforcement, fire fighter, or other designated emergency personnel utilizing vehicle, boat, or aircraft -mounted public address systems. (Written warnings should be used to warn the hearing-impaired on non-English speaking persons.)
- D. Telephone fan-out calls to schools, major employers, the hospital, nursing homes, day-care centers, etc.
- E. Pagers carried by key emergency response personnel, and people who usually work outside.
- F. Mass media, i.e., radio and television, through public announcements, and/or the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

#### 2. Direction and Control

- See Direction and Control Annex in Section II: Functional Annexes.
- The 24-hour, 911 Emergency Dispatch Center, is Stillwater County's primary contact point for the receipt and dissemination of emergency alert and warning.
- When time permits, e.g., in slowly developing disasters such as floods, the decision to disseminate the alert and warning to the general public will be made by the Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator (DESC), or his/her designee, in coordination with the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), or their designee(s).
- In some situations, an Incident Commander may initiate alerting and warning. Any such

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situation requiring warning of a substantial number of private citizens will be reported to the EOC in sufficient detail to permit them to evaluate the action that has been taken and to determine any additional actions to be initiated.

- Incident Commanders are authorized to carry out area, community, etc warning and evacuation on their own in fast-developing situations, e.g., hazardous materials incidents, in accordance with the Incident Command Procedures and this plan.
- The activation of the EAS normally will be authorized by the DESC or designated representative, or as described in hazard-specific appendices.
- The DESC or his deputy will activate the EAS by contacting the NWS (406-652-3214 or 1-800-240-4596) to initiate the public broadcast message.

### 3. Operational Roles and Responsibilities

#### **Stillwater County DES Coordinator:**

- ❖ Establish an effective County emergency alert and warning system
- ❖ Conduct vigorous public awareness campaigns to educate the public of how alerts and warnings will be disseminated throughout the jurisdiction. Stress hazard awareness and personal preparedness in presentations with the media, schools and service clubs.
- ❖ Exercise warning and notification procedures at least annually.
- ❖ Involve the media and the local ARES groups in exercises and critiques.
- ❖ Test the EAS and emergency communications at least annually.
- ❖ Review and update this annex.
- ❖ Ensure the warning of key personnel had been accomplished by contacting the dispatch center.
- ❖ When notified of an emergency situation, reports to the EOC.
- ❖ Ensure radio equipment is working and appropriate agencies and groups are contacted.
- ❖ Inform the public through the EAS. Ensure that the EAS is not overly used to cause undue public concern.
- ❖ Ensure that special needs populations in the affected areas are being warned of the situation and taking recommended protective actions.
- ❖ Implements contingency plans to provide warnings if established warning systems fail to work.
- ❖ Appoints a PIO. If the primary PIO is not available, the new PIO should be experienced in the roles and responsibilities of a Public Information Officer.
- ❖ Hold a post-response evaluation to assess effectiveness of alert and warning process.
- ❖ Stress mitigation efforts, structural and non-structural, to department heads involved in the recovery efforts.

#### **Stillwater County Public Information Officer:**

- ❖ Reports to the EOC, upon activation.
- ❖ Contacts the media to inform them about the emergency.
- ❖ Supervises the preparation of emergency announcements for the EAS broadcasts.
- ❖ Coordinates all public announcements with the Incident Commander.
- ❖ Issues news media releases from the EOC, or, if activated, establishes and coordinates all

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actions with the Joint Information Center (JIC).

- ❖ Provides for briefings with the participation of the CEO and other involved in an emergency and the State PIO.
- ❖ Verifies the authenticity of incoming information.
- ❖ Verifies that duplicate or contradictory releases are not being made.
- ❖ Takes action to maintain control of rumors.
- ❖ These or similar responsibilities will apply to any PIO working in the Stillwater County JIC.

#### 4. Consideration and Implementation Responsibilities

- **Rumor Control**

Rumor control is vital during emergency operations. Sensitive or critical information must be authorized and verified before release. Unconfirmed rumors or information from unauthorized sources may be responded to in the following manner:

*“We will not confirm until we have been able to check out the information through authorized sources. Once we have confirmed information, we will release it to all members of the press at the same time.”*

Do not release information that might hinder emergency response, prejudice the outcome of an investigation, or pose a further threat to public safety. Examples include:

- Personal conjecture about the course of the emergency or the conduct of response.
- Speculation.
- Demeaning information/statements.
- Information that might compromise the effectiveness of response and recovery.

- **Public Emergency Alert Notification Systems**

Various systems exist for mass public notification through the telephone system. If phones are working, computerized systems can call thousands of residences at the same time to deliver pre-recorded warning messages. These systems are capable of making calls on a continuous basis until shut down. Two national-level systems that exist are:

- Reverse 911
- A child is Missing Alert System (Amber Alert System)

Currently, activation of such systems must be made by designated law enforcement officials.

#### 5. Administration and Logistics

##### A. General

- 1) The maintenance of the EOC and associated alert and warning equipment is the responsibility of the DESC. These responsibilities further include all procedures, personnel staffing and training related to EOC operations.
- 2) Administration associated with normal emergency services alert and warning dispatching is

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accomplished by SSD Director in the Dispatch Center.

### **B. Emergency Alert System (EAS)**

- 1) The Emergency Alert System had replaced the Emergency Broadcast System as the primary digitized warning system for several counties in south eastern Montana, including Stillwater County. The system is designed to provide a 24-hour warning point to the public for emergencies and disasters. The EAS is composed of commercial AM and FM radio and television broadcast stations authorized by the FCC to remain on the air during a declared emergency and to broadcast announcements as directed by local emergency management officials.
- 2) KEMC Radio Station (91.7 FM) is the primary station, with simulcast capability to the other participating local stations. The local dispatch center has generators, to enable broadcasting during power outages. This makes it essential for people to have battery-powered radios to receive these important messages during times of emergency.
- 3) The DESC or his deputy should activate the EAS by contacting the NWS (1-800-240-4596) to initiate a public message.
- 4) Priorities for the EAS are:
  - a) Presidential Message
  - b) Local (County)
  - c) State Programming
  - d) National Weather Service and Regional
- 5) because of the large area served by EAS, its use must be restricted to situations in which all four of the following emergency criteria apply:
  - a) The situation is imminent (time is critical).
  - b) The situation is life threatening to the public.
  - c) The public must be provided with instructions.
  - d) Other warning methods would be ineffective.

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### Appendix 1: Sample EAS Messages

#### EAS Message #1 Home Shelter

The following message has been released by Stillwater County DES and the Emergency Operations Center:

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ has announced that an emergency presently exists at \_\_\_\_\_. Persons living or working within an approximate \_\_\_\_\_ mile radius of this location are requested to take sheltering actions.
2. There is no need for residents to leave the area in order to take sheltering action.
3. Persons who have taken their shelter should observe the following procedures:
  - a. Close all doors and windows.
  - b. Disconnect air conditioners or fans.
  - c. Lower the thermostat setting of any heater or turn off air conditioner/evaporative cooler to minimize the intake of external air.
  - d. Keep pets inside, and to extent possible, bring farm animals under covered facilities.
4. People living, working, or traveling in the following areas are affected by this request:  
(Repeat the list of areas on time, then continue the message.)
5. Persons living, working, or traveling in this area should take sheltering action. Persons traveling to home or work should proceed to their destination in an orderly fashion obeying all traffic regulations. Non-residents traveling in motor vehicles should clear the area in an orderly fashion.
6. All persons traveling in the area in motor vehicles should roll up windows, close air vents, and turn off air conditioners. If in an automobile, or when sheltering is not immediately available, improvised respiratory protection may be taken. Place a handkerchief, towel, or other similar item snugly over the nose and mouth until indoors.
7. You are **not** to do the following:  
(Read statement A., if school is in session.)
  - A. You are requested not to telephone or go to the school your children are attending. They are in a covered protected environment and will be bused home when it is safe to do so.
  - B. Do not telephone town, county state, or federal officials directly involved. They will keep you informed of the situation through this station. Do not use the telephone except for medical emergencies.
8. The preceding has been an announcement from the Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center. It calls for all persons living or working within a \_\_\_\_\_ mile radius of \_\_\_\_\_ to take shelter. For further information, stay tuned to this station.

(Thereafter, this message should be repeated **every five minutes** until the station is informed by the EOC to end transmission.)

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### EAS Message #2: Evacuation

The following message had been released by Stillwater County DES and the Emergency Operations Center:

1. The Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center had announced that an emergency condition exists at \_\_\_\_\_ and recommends the evacuation of all persons living or working within an approximate \_\_\_\_\_ radius of this location.

2. This advisory affects persons living in the following area:

(Repeat the list of affected areas one time, then continue with message.)

3. Please use the following evacuation routes for your neighborhood. If you will need a place to stay, report to the mass care center located at \_\_\_\_\_.

(Repeat the list of affected areas one time, then continue the message.)

4. If you have housebound persons or invalids in your home and require assistance in moving them, contact Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center at \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Please cooperate by checking on persons who may live alone in your neighborhood. If they have no way of providing for their own transportation, please assist them if possible.
6. Persons affected by this evacuation advisory should prepare to spend a minimum of three days (72 hours) away from home and should have with them sufficient quantities of clothing, sleeping bags, or blankets, personal care items and prescription drugs for at least this period. Persons evacuating to mass care centers will be provided with food and sanitary facilities. Pet will **not** be allowed inside the mass care centers.
7. Farmers/ranchers affected by this evacuation advisory should shelter their animals and contact the County agricultural extension agent at \_\_\_\_\_ for further instructions regarding protection of livestock, foodstuffs, and regaining access to the evacuated area.
8. Persons planning to evacuate are reminded to take the following steps prior to leaving:
  - A. Secure your home and property.
  - B. Turn off all lights and electrical appliances.
  - C. Turn down any heating systems (or turn off air conditioning systems.)
  - D. Proceed calmly to your destination, obeying all traffic laws and driving carefully.
  - E. Please obey law enforcement officers and others who will be directing traffic along the evacuation routes.
9. The preceding has been an announcement from the Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center regarding recommendation by the \_\_\_\_\_ for the evacuation of all persons living within a \_\_\_\_\_ mile radius of \_\_\_\_\_. For further information, please stay tuned to this station.

(Thereafter, this message should be repeated **every five minutes** until the station is informed by the EOC to end transmission.)

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### EAS Message #3 School Evacuation

1. The following message had been released by the Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center. It supplements instructions given to the public concerning the evacuation announcement for an approximate \_\_\_\_\_ mile radius of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Parents with children attending schools within a \_\_\_\_\_ mile radius of \_\_\_\_\_ are advised that their children are subject to a separate evacuation plan while school is in session. These schools are \_\_\_\_\_. Children at these schools will be taken directly to shelter areas. Parents are to meet their children at these shelter areas outside the emergency zone. ***I Repeat, children will be taken directly to areas outside the risk area where parents are to meet their children.*** Parents are not to report to their children's schools.
3. Children attending the schools in the risk area will be taken to the following areas where they may be picked up:

**School:**

**Evacuation Area:**

(Repeat list one time and continue the message.)

4. Parents are urged not to telephone or to go to the schools their children attend. To do so will only create confusion. Parents are to meet their children at the previously announced evacuation areas. ***I repeat***, parents are urged **not** to telephone or to go to the schools that their children attend, but to meet their children at the evacuation areas.
5. The preceding had been an announcement from the Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center giving instructions on where to meet their children who are attending schools within an approximate \_\_\_\_\_ mile radius of \_\_\_\_\_.

(Please repeat entire message one time.)



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### **EAS Message #4 HazMat Incident**

Stillwater County Disaster and Emergency Services brings you the following message:

An accident involving a hazardous material has occurred at the following location:

\_\_\_\_\_.

Due to the nature of the chemical involved, it is important that those living or working in the following areas evacuate immediately. Those people between \_\_\_\_\_ (north/south) and \_\_\_\_\_ (east/west) should leave the area immediately.

Before leaving, evacuees are asked to lock their homes and businesses and go to a location outside the affected area. Or you may go to the following reception center, \_\_\_\_\_.

Those needing assistance can call the following number: \_\_\_\_\_.

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### **EAS Message #5 Street Closures/ Flooding**

The Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center announces the current storm had caused severe/moderate flooding in several areas of the town/county.

As of \_\_\_\_\_ today, the following roads/streets are closed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Please avoid these roads/streets. If you must travel, use alternative routes. Avoid low-lying roads near streams, creeks, and rivers. Do not drive over a flooded road or bridge. If your car stalls, abandon it immediately and get to higher ground. Be careful of attempting to walk through flood waters. If floodwaters are moving swiftly, as little as six inches of water can knock you off your feet. Roadblocks will be set up to prohibit access into affected areas.

Again the following roads/streets are closed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

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### EAS Message #6 Flooding Evacuation

The Stillwater County Emergency Operations Center announces the following message:

The flooding situation may worsen in parts of the town/county. For your own safety, you are strongly urged to evacuate the following areas as soon as possible:

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If time permits, take essential items such as – **medicine, special foods, personal items, baby supplies, money, and valuable papers** – do not overload your vehicle. Secure your home or business before you leave. Check on neighbors who might need assistance.

If you cannot stay with relatives or friends outside the evacuation area, go to the following shelter location: \_\_\_\_\_.

If you have no form of transportation, or are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to assist you, or call the following number: \_\_\_\_\_.

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### **EAS Message #7: Snow Emergency**

The Stillwater County Disaster and Emergency Services, in cooperation with the National Weather Service, announce a snow emergency has been declared due to the current weather conditions.

A Winter Storm Warning is effective until \_\_\_\_\_ for the following areas:

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At least \_\_\_\_\_ inches of snow is expected with the storm. All persons are advised to stay indoors and travel only if necessary. If you must travel, take an emergency supply kit with you.

Again, a winter storm warning is in effect until \_\_\_\_\_ for the following areas:

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### Appendix 2: Sheltering-in-Place

#### AMERICAN RED CROSS: FACT SHEET FOR CITIZENS

##### **What Shelter-in-Place Means:**

One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to shelter-in-place. This precaution aimed to keep you safe while remaining indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.) Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. If you are told to shelter-in-place, follow the instructions provided in this Fact Sheet.

##### **Why You Might Need to Shelter-in-Place:**

Chemical, biological, or radiological contaminants may be released accidentally or intentionally into the environment. Should this occur, information will be provided by local authorities on television and radio stations on how to protect you and your family. Because information will most likely be provided on television and radio, it is important to keep a TV or radio on, even during the workday. The important thing is for you to follow the instructions of local authorities and know what to do if they advise you to shelter-in-place.

##### **How to Shelter-in-Place**

###### **At Home:**

- Close and lock all windows and exterior doors.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.
- Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
- Close the fireplace damper.
- Get your family's disaster supply kit and make sure the radio is working.
- Go to an interior room without windows that's above ground level. In the case of a chemical threat, an above-ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air, and may seep into basements even if the windows are closed.
- Bring your pets with you, and be sure to bring additional food and water supplies for them.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room you select. Call your emergency contact and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door and any vents into the room.
- Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

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### **At Work:**

- Close the business.
- Bring everyone into the room(s). Shut and lock the door(s).
- If there are customers, clients, or visitors in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave. When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps now, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.
- Unless there is an imminent threat, ask employees, customers, clients, and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- Turn on call-forwarding or alternative telephone answering systems or services. If the business has voice mail or an automated attendant, change the recording to indicate that the business is closed, and that staff and visitors are remaining in the building until authorities advise it is safe to leave.
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside.
- If you are told there is a danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.
- Have employees familiar with your building's mechanical systems turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air – these systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed or disabled.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as non-perishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting, and plastic garbage bags.
- Select interior room(s) above the ground floor, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows will work well. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes, because this equipment may not be able to be sealed from the outdoors.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select. Call emergency contacts and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use Duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room.
- Write down the names of everyone in the room, and call you business' designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you, and their affiliation with your business (employee, visitor, client, customer.)
- Keep listening to the radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Local official may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

### **At School:**

- Close the school. Activate the school's emergency plan. Follow reverse evacuation procedures to bring students, faculty, and staff indoors.
- If there are visitors in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave.

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When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps now, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.

- Provide for answering telephone inquiries from concerned parents by having at least one telephone with the school's listed telephone numbers available in the room selected to provide shelter for the school secretary, or person designated to answer these calls. This room should also be sealed. There should be a way to communicate among all rooms where people are sheltering-in-place in the school.
- Ideally, provide for a way to make announcements over the school-wide public address system from the room where the top school official takes shelter.
- If children have cell phones, allow them to use them to call a parent or guardian to let them know that they have been asked to remain in school until further notice, and they are safe.
- If the school has voice mail, or an automated attendant, change the recording to indicate that the school is closed, students and staff are remaining in the building until the authorities advise that it is safe to leave.
- Provide directions to close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, direct that window shades, blinds, or curtains be closed.
- Have employees familiar with your building's mechanical systems turned off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air – these systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed or disabled.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as non-perishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting, and plastic garbage bags.
- Select interior room(s) above the ground floor, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Classrooms may be used if there are no windows or the windows are sealed and cannot be opened. Large storage closets, utility rooms, meeting rooms, and even a gymnasium without exterior windows will work well.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select. Call emergency contacts and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Bring everyone into the room, shut and lock the door.
- Use Duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room.
- Write down the names of everyone in the room, and call you schools' designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you.
- Listen for an official announcement from school officials via the public address system, and stay where you are until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

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### **In Your Vehicle:**

If you are driving a vehicle and hear advice to “shelter-in-place” on the radio, take these steps:

- If you are very close to home, your office, or a public building, go there immediately and go inside. Follow the shelter-in-place recommendations for the place you pick described above.
- If you are unable to get to a home or a building quickly and safely, then pull over to the side of the road. Stop your vehicle in the safest place possible. If it is sunny outside, it is preferable to stop under a bridge or in a shady spot, to avoid overheating.
- Turn off engine. Close windows and vents.
- If possible, seal the heating/air conditioning vents with duct tape.
- Listen to the radio regularly for updated advice and instructions.
- Stay where you are until you are told it is safe to get back on the road. Be aware that some roads may be closed or traffic detoured. Follow the directions of law enforcement officials.
- Local officials on the scene are the best source of information for your particular situation. Following their instructions during and after emergencies regarding sheltering, food, water, and cleanup methods is your safest choice.
- Remember that instructions to shelter-in-place are usually provided for durations of a few hours, not days or weeks. There is little danger that the room in which you are taking shelter will run out of oxygen and you will suffocate.